

Hopkinton Wastewater Department
Operation & Maintenance Committee
Meeting Minutes

October 30, 2012 **DRAFT**

There was a meeting of the Hopkinton Wastewater Department Operation & Maintenance Committee on Tuesday October 30, 2012. The meeting was held at the Wastewater Plant and began at 7 PM. George Langwasser, Dick Drescher, Dick Strickford, Stewart Nelson, Lloyd Holmes and Steve Clough were present.

The Committee terms were discussed. Lloyd's term expires in 2012 and he is willing to be appointed for another term. Dick Strickford's term is up in 2013 and he also wants to volunteer for another term appointment. Steve will inform the selectmen's Office.

Steve went over regulatory issues. Electronic Reporting to the EPA and Collection System Maintenance are required as part of the EPA General Permit renewal which took effect on January 1, 2012. There is also more reporting on the EPA Daily Monitoring Report and to the NHDES. The QA/QC Laboratory plan, Facility Emergency Plan, and Class B Dam Plan have to be kept updated. There was a brief discussion of these issues.

Steve pointed out to Committee Members that increasing regulatory requirements, distribution system maintenance, and staffing requirements will continue to increase the costs of operating the Department. There have also never been any plans to expand the stagnant rate base. Considering that the Department is funded entirely by service fees the combination of these issues will inevitably lead to significant rate increases. There was a brief discussion of this topic.

The Highway Department plan to upgrade a section of Penacook Road might include adding sewer lines. The project engineer will look at design and installation costs and the Hopkinton Board of Selectmen will decide if sewer lines should be included as part of the final project.

A Laundromat has been proposed at Park Avenue Plaza in the unit previously occupied by Louis's Pizza. Steve provided members with a package of information that included letters, permit application, correspondence, and plans & specifications for water usage and disposal. There is relatively low water use projected, the Contoocook Village Precinct has already approved the required service and the proposal doesn't appear to violate any of the applicable sections of the Sewer Ordinance.

The impact fee that was already assessed for Louie's Pizza is comparable to the impact fee that would be required for the Laundromat. The Committee therefore felt that no additional impact fees would be applicable. After some discussion Dick Strickford made a

motion to recommend approval of the Park Avenue Plaza Laundromat without an additional impact fee, Lloyd seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous (5-0).

Steve went over expenses to date for the 2012 Sewer budget and the proposed 2013 Sewer Budget. There are no significant changes. There is an unplanned expense concerning the main pumps at the system's only pump station. One of the pumps has a seal failure which has led to excessive leaking and will eventually cause more damage and a complete failure. Both pumps at the station are operated on an alternate basis and have approximately the same hours on them. Both pumps were rebuilt about 12 years ago. The second should be expected to have a comparable failure in the future.

Steve went over the options. It will cost about \$12,500 to rebuild the failing pump in part because a new impeller costs about \$4,500. A new pump costs about \$14,500 plus installation and testing costs for a total of \$18,500. Steve suggested rebuilding the failing pump for \$8,000 without installing a new impeller to keep costs down and hoping that the old impeller isn't in too bad shape. The last impeller was replaced after 15 years. After some discussion the Committee felt that the pump should be rebuilt for \$12,500 with a new impeller. Steve has already informed the Board of the anticipated costs and will work out the details with Neal and move forward. The cost of rebuilding the other pump is in the 2013 budget but the CIP Fund for the Sewer Department may be changed at the upcoming town meeting to include equipment replacement. If this happens the second pump rebuild will be funded from the CIP Fund and the expense will be removed from the 2013 budget.

Steve went over the Sewer Fund. The bills used to be paid directly from the fund but now they are paid from the general fund and then reimbursed. Due to this change Steve went over the beginning balance and income and expenses for the year. There is only a few thousand dollars expected to be in the Sewer Fund at the end of the year and expenses have started to be higher than income from service fees.

Steve went over the fee increases from 2005 and 2009 and the possibilities for increasing fees at this time. There was some discussion on whether to change to a different kind of billing system. It was decided that Steve would put together some information on that issue to be reviewed later but that for now the fees should be increased under the current system.

Dick Strickford made a motion to recommend raising the sewer service fees from a base charge of \$105/6 mos. to \$115/6 mos. and from a \$.0056/Gal. charge to \$.0062/Gal. on the usage fee to become effective on October 1, 2012 and to be reflected on the April 2013 sewer billing. Lloyd seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous (5-0).

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 P.M.

These Minutes were drafted by Steve Clough, Asst. PW Supt., Waste

